

Series: Isaiah  
Title: God's Way  
Text: Isaiah 55: 6-9  
Date: May 25, 2014  
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

We will just jump right into our message this morning.

**I. FIRST, GOD GIVES A COMMAND**—In Isaiah 55: 6, God says, **‘Seek ye the LORD...call upon him.’**

Do not seek his benefits—seek ye the LORD. Do not seek a sign—seek ye the LORD. Do not seek a church membership or a office in the church—seek ye the LORD. Have you sought the LORD Jesus Christ?

There is no doubt, if any sinner seeks the LORD it is because the LORD has first sought the sinner.

Romans 3:11: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

Psalm 27: 8: When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

### **All of Grace**

Salvation is by grace alone. The works of God's grace in Christ are not in any way dependent upon, determined by, or accomplished by the will, works or worth of man (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom 11:6; II Tim. 1:9).

- Election (Eph. 1:3-6).
- Redemption (Rom. 3:24).
- Justification (Gal. 2:16).
- Regeneration (James 1:18).
- Sanctification (Heb. 10:10, 14).
- Preservation (John 10:27-29).
- Glorification (Jude 24-25).

All is of the Lord and by the Lord. So if you seek the LORD, God will receive all the glory, because God first seeks his own.

### **Our Responsibility**

**EQUALLY TRURE—BE SURE TO GET THIS—EQAULLY TRUE IS THAT GOD COMMDANDS YOU TO, “YOU, Seek the LORD; YOU CALL UPON HIM.”** Every sinner has a responsibility to use, even the natural faculties God has given you, to seek the LORD and call upon him. Christ said,

Mark 4: 23: If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. 24: And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

Rolph Barnard, “Walk in the light God has given you and he will give you more light.” What's that mean?

God has given you a place where the gospel is preached in spirit and in truth—God has given you light that not everyone in this world has. You have a responsibility to seek God by hearing the gospel preached. God has given you the written word. You have a responsibility to seek God in his word. God has given access to his throne through the blood and righteousness of Christ Jesus his Son. You have a responsibility to call upon God at his throne of grace. This is light God has given you. Have you walked in this light? Have you sought God diligently? Have you called upon God diligently?

Do not use God's sovereignty as an excuse not to seek God. If you say, "Well, Christ said no sinner can seek Christ except God the Father first draw him, so I'll just sit here. If I'm one of the elect he'll draw me." So you refuse to walk in the light God has given you; refuse to seek the Lord; refuse to call upon the Lord. Christ said,

Mark 4: 25:...and he that hath not, [he that hath not meted God's light with a measure of true seeking] from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

## Urgency

This is one reason, God reveals in our text that there is an urgency to this thing of seeking the Lord. God says, Isaiah 55: 6: "Seek ye the LORD, **while he may be found**, call ye upon him **while he is near:**"

Proverbs 8: 17: I love them that love me; and those that **seek me early shall find me.**

Proverbs 1:22: How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? 23: Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. 24: Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; 25: But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: 26: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; 27: When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. 28: Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: 29: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: 30: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. 31: Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. 32: For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. 33: But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Jeremiah 29: 13: And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

See this controversy is not between you and me, but between God and you. While you have a faithful ministry, Christ may be found. Seek Christ now while he may be found, call upon Christ while he is near! You are not doing God a favor, God has given you a privilege which many in this world do not have. But if you will not seek him while he is near, the time may come when you will call but he will not hear.

2 Thessalonians 2: 10:...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11: And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Believer, this is for you and me as well.

Matthew 6:33:...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;...

Psalm 62:8: Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

Apostle Peter said, "To whom coming..."

Well, preacher, how do I seek the LORD?

**II. GOD COMMANDS THAT THERE IS SOMETHING THAT MUST BE FORSAKEN—Isaiah 55: 7: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: Compare this with v8—For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.**

## **Forsake**

What are all unregenerate men told to forsake? God commands you forsake your way. The course of ungodliness, rebellion, and sin is your way; the course of self-righteous, works religion is your way.

The “wicked man” is the vile, profligate sinner. The “unrighteous man” is the white-washed, self-righteous, moral man. God puts the sinner who is religious, trying to make himself righteous, in the same boat with the common whore!

In fact, Christ said it is harder for the self-righteous-moralist to forsake his ways and his thoughts of salvation than it is for the immoral sinner to forsake his ways of open immorality.

Matthew 21:31: Verily I say unto you, [speaking to self-righteous, religious men] That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Matthew 9: 12: Jesus said, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. 13: But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

What is God’s reason that you must forsake your ways and your thoughts? Because God’s way is not as your way, neither his thoughts your thoughts.

Sinner, mark it down: whatever way—you think—seems right to you—is wrong.

Proverbs 14:12: There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Every carnal man has got some thought, some way, by which he thinks God will receive him into heaven. The most vile sinner here this morning has some vain thought and vain way, that God will pardon his sins. But every thought, every way, of every unregenerate man can be summed up with this one way: self.

Here are some examples: One man thinks he will be saved because God is love and God is merciful. He thinks God will not destroy the souls that he has made. He thinks hell is just figurative—to get our attention—hell is not to be taken literally. He is wrong. God says, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.”

Another man thinks, “God will save me because I’m sincere. You ask someone, “Are you a sinner.” They answer, “Well, I’m not perfect but I do the best I can.” He is wrong. God says, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts:”

The most common is this: “Well, at least I’ve got my faith!” This so-called faith is a work. Sinners are justified by God, by Christ, not by the act of believing! God gives faith to receive Christ our Justifier who has already accomplished the work on Calvary’s cross. That so-called faith which is an act looked upon to justify—that so-called faith whereby a sinner thinks he is justified by his work of believing—never justified anyone! God says, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.”

There are as many vain thoughts and vain ways as there are vain sinners. But at the heart of them all—the motive—is self: self-salvation, self-righteousness, self-sanctification. God commands you forsake your thoughts and your ways! Whatever way the sinner has thought up, God says forsake it.

## **God’s Thoughts**

Here is why we are commanded to forsake our ways and thoughts, God says, **Isaiah 55: 8: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.**

God's way is to choose whom he will and pass by whom he will—to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes—that is God's way. Sinner, is God's way, your way? Do you bow to God's way?

Luke 10:21: In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Gods' Way is the Lord Jesus Christ his only begotten Son!

John 10: 1: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up **some other way**, the same is a **thief and a robber**. 2: But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3: To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4: And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5: And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers....7: Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8: All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9: I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 14:6: Jesus saith...I am **the way, the truth, and the life**: no man cometh unto the Father, **but by me**.

God's one way of being both just and of justifying his sinful people is by the obedience and death of his Son—not by works of righteousness which we have done! Indeed, men are sincere in their self-righteousness but they are sincerely wrong and sincerely lost!

Romans 10: 2: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3: For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4: For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Sinner, is this your way? “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4: 12)

God's way of salvation is to regenerate his child—to give them faith and repentance—through the hearing of the truth of Jesus Christ—and to do so by God the Holy Spirit—not by the sinner giving himself life and faith and repentance and washing himself—this is given us through Jesus Christ—because Christ already justified those the Spirit quickens to life.

Titus 3: 3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. 4: But after that, the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

“That being justified by his grace”—because God already justified his people in Christ his Son by his grace. Therefore we should be—must be-- “made heirs”—be regenerated to newness of life, given faith that we might enjoy the privilege of knowing we are sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ. This is God's way! Sinner, is this your way?

Sinner, you must forsake your thoughts about you! God's way is to teach his child in that new heart that all we are is sin in our flesh—to make us loath ourselves, so much so that we repent from everything we called righteousness,

to make us loath ourselves, so much that we depart from our sins and rebellion against God to follow Christ. God's teaches this in the heart of his child,

Isaiah 57: 10: Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved. 11: And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not? 12: I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

Sinner, is this your way: chosen by God the Father, redeemed by God the Son, regenerated by God the Holy Spirit, made to know all you are is sin, that all your righteousnesses are as filthy rags? Have you been made to confess that God's Way is not your way? That God's thoughts are not your thoughts? Have you been made to know you are the wicked and unrighteous man? If you have not been grieved, if you have not been brought to say, "There is no hope for me. I'm lost. I'm undone. I'm a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Then you have found the life of your own hand. God says, "thy righteousness, and thy works; shall not profit thee." God says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts:"

**III. THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE: GOD COMMANDS THERE IS ONE WE MUST RUN UNTO—  
Isaiah 55: 7:...and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.**

The 'LORD' spoken of here is the Lord Jesus Christ. The same one spoken of in verse 4: 'I have given him (that is, Christ) for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people' (Isaiah 55:4). Notice he is called 'our God.'

### **True Conversion**

It is not enough to forsake your own thoughts and ways but you must return to God through faith in Jesus Christ our God. True conversion—repentance and faith—is not changing doctrine. Many do that who never forsake self who never return to the LORD. True conversion is forsaking your former vain thoughts and ways and returning to the LORD.

Notice here he says, "Return" unto the LORD. You cannot return to someone unless you were with them previously. The gospel is called the ministry of "Re-conciliation" (2 Cor 5:18) Why? When we were we previously with the LORD?

All those who by God's effectual grace shall "return unto the LORD" were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world—"accepted in the Beloved!" All God's people were in a state friendship with God before the fall. But when Adam fell, all God's elect became enemies, right along with every other sinner.

Yet, God loved us in Christ and for Christ's sake, therefore God RE-conciled us to himself in Christ! Therefore, when God saves his child from sin to salvation it is called a RETURN. This is what true faith confesses! Sinner, has God brought you to admit that your very nature is sin—your thoughts—are sin? Then flee to Christ!

### **Not Our Thoughts**

One might say, "But my sin is too great! God will not receive me because my sin is too great!" Again, sinner, that's your way and your thoughts—you must forsake it. Read verses 7 & 8 again—**Isaiah 55: 7: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.**

One reason you and I are so slow to believe that God will have mercy on us is because, by nature, it is not our way to have mercy on those who have transgressed against us. We are slow to believe that God will pardon us, because in our sin-nature, we are so slow to forgive others.

But sinner, underline the word “will”—“return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

Micah 7: 18: Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.

1 John 1: 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Hebrews 7: 25: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

### **Abundant Pardon**

One last thing, notice God Isaiah 55: 7: the LORD “**will have mercy...for he will ABUNDANTLY PARDON.**” He will multiply pardon.

One, he will provide pardon upon pardon upon pardon—we need continual pardon therefore Christ **everliveth to make intercession for us.**

Two, it means he will pardon the worst of the worst, the greatest sinner, the chief of sinners. Truth is, the greater the sinner the sweeter the mercy and the greater the pardon the closer to Christ’s feet! Many examples could be given. I’ll give one.

Illustration: The woman with the alabaster box was a great, great sinner. Simon, the Pharisee, was one of those unrighteous men, who would not forsake his ways and his thoughts for Christ. He thought he needed no forgiveness. Oh, but she did. Christ said,

Luke 7: 44: Simon, seeest thou this woman? I entered thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. 45: Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. 46: My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. 47: Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. 48: And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

**Application:** May God be pleased now, to give you grace to heed his word:

**1) Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:**

**2) Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts:**

**3) and let him return unto the LORD,**

**and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon!**

**Amen!**